

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

I. Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1, 4-10, 13, 15 and 16 remain unchanged.

Independent claim 12 has been amended to incorporate features similar to the distinguishing features recited in claim 1.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 4-10, 13, 15 and 16 were identified by the Examiner as being allowable. The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable claims. As mentioned above, claims 1, 4-10, 13, 15 and 16 remain unchanged. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 4-10, 13, 15 and 16 remain in condition for allowance.

In item 6 on page 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that “if Applicant amends the claim 12 with similar limitations as to claim 1, it will overcome current rejection.” The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter. As mentioned above, claim 12 has been amended to include limitations similar to the distinguishing limitations recited in claim 1. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 12 now recites allowable subject matter and is in condition for allowance.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Kondo and Matsuno. This rejection is believed clearly inapplicable to claim 12 in view of the above-mentioned indication of allowable subject matter. As a result, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification thereof is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 29, 2010